

works out to be about \$3.4 million a minute. To put that in better perspective, it's \$58,000 a second. We can't even say it fast enough. This is a problem.

How do we get out of this problem? We have to map out a course. It's a budget. The Republicans passed a budget. The House passed a budget outlining a way for us to be able to cut back over \$6 trillion over the next decade. I would argue that American families and households all across the land operate on a budget. Businesses do the same. Yet we happen to not be able to do that here in Washington.

The United States Senate has not picked up or passed a budget in over 750 days. The American family wouldn't operate like that. I know as a small business owner I couldn't keep my doors open if I didn't have a budget to outline where our priorities were going to be. It is a blueprint. It's not a final standing bill or thing that's going to say exactly how we're going to spend it, but it is a blueprint going forward so that we can get those in the Senate and elsewhere to be able to come together so that we can map out how we are going to get out of this mess. Because I do agree with the President when he says that the choices that we're making today, the bad choices of today are going to be placed on the backs of our children and grandchildren. For me, that's unacceptable.

I decided to run for Congress largely because the amount of money that we were spending in Washington was going to be unconscionable for me to pass along to my children. I have a 9-year-old, a 7-year-old, and a 4-year-old. By the time they're my age, we are going to have to pay exactly double in taxes just to service the government. We pay 42 cents of every single dollar we have just to service our debt.

The administration now is asking us to raise the debt ceiling. This is an important issue. But I'm here to tell you that we need to have some leadership. Leadership is critical at this point in time.

What is the plan? I don't want to talk about bickering. I want to make sure that colleagues on both sides of the aisle come to the table. We know that there are negotiations going on right now, but I still would like to have a plan articulated to the American public. What is the plan? Because simply raising the debt ceiling without a plan on how we're going to pay down this debt is like—well, it's like sitting around the kitchen table and not worrying about the credit card debt of an irresponsible teenager. You wouldn't do that at home. We wouldn't do that in business. You should expect that your government does the same.

Now, when we look at this debt crisis that we have, as a small business owner, I look at it somewhat like a business. I look at it that we have just purchased a business, and we think it's the greatest business in the world with the United States of America. That business has some debt, and we're obli-

gated to pay that debt. We just have to figure out how it is that we are going to restructure that business so that we can pay down that debt and make it a strong, viable business going forward. That's what we have to do. To simply raise the debt ceiling and not have to restructure would be a violation of everything that we hold dear.

With that, I call on leadership, leadership here in Washington from those on both sides of the aisle, to come together to solve the problems of our time and put our country first.

HONORING THE LIFE AND MEMORY OF BERNADETTE MCARN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUTTERFIELD) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, this past Saturday in my home town of Wilson, North Carolina, the Wilson Community College held its annual commencement exercise. From all accounts, it was a wonderful occasion. But for one family in the community, the McArn family, there was great sadness on this occasion because their loved one was due to graduate; but sadly, she passed away on January 14, 2011, at the young age of 45. And so I take this opportunity today to honor the life and memory of that individual, Ms. Bernadette McArn.

The youngest of four children, Bernadette was born on July 12, 1965, to Isiah and Wynomia Crocker McArn. She was a graduate of Ralph L. Fike High School and, but for her passing, would have earned an associate's degree from the college. It is fitting to note that last spring Bernadette distinguished herself and pleased her family when she made the Dean's List.

This has been a very difficult time for the McArn family. They were very proud of Bernadette, and her memory will live within their hearts forever.

I ask my colleagues to join me in offering our deepest condolences to the McArn family, friends, and loved ones.

FOOD INSECURITY

Mr. Speaker, I want to use my remaining time to talk about the issue of hunger.

In this same community where Bernadette McArn lived her entire life, many are suffering from what I call food insecurity. At 11 p.m. last night, a line began to form at the Wilson OIC to receive food commodities today. Hundreds of citizens in this small community—black, white, and brown—stood all night long to be positioned to receive the basic commodity of food.

Earlier this year, a study by the Food Research and Action Center showed that the First District of North Carolina ranks as the second worst for food insecurity in the country. Last Thanksgiving, about 2,000 people waited overnight—again—for a 25-pound bag of groceries at this same community-based program. For those of us living in eastern North Carolina, this

comes as no surprise and underscores the need for a strong nutrition safety net.

Unfortunately, this is not an isolated incident in our country. As a State, North Carolina ranks sixth worst in the country for food security, with a food hardship rate of 23.5 percent, and the numbers are even worse in my district in eastern North Carolina.

The Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina is called on to serve more than 500,000 people annually in 34 counties in central and eastern North Carolina, and about 73,000 different people receive emergency food assistance in any given week. Of those people, the food bank reports that 40 percent choose between paying for food and paying for utilities or heat; 33 percent choose between paying for food and paying their rent or mortgage; 37 percent choose between paying for food and paying for medicine or medical care; and 38 percent choose between paying for food and paying for transportation.

Mr. Speaker, as we continue our work, we must keep in mind that as many as 50 million Americans are struggling with food security. The Federal Government certainly needs to find ways to cut costs and reduce spending, but that burden should not fall heaviest on the people with the greatest needs.

As I close, let me just encourage our citizens to stay strong in their faith and know that Democrats will fight for you.

And I would like to thank Mr. Howard Jones of the Wilson OIC, his staff, and all of the volunteers for their extraordinary contribution to the Wilson community.

DEBT CEILING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. Speaker, creating jobs and growing the economy is the number one goal of the 112th Congress, everything we can do to create jobs and help this country move forward and get our economy back on track, but long-term economic growth and job creation is only possible if we control the uncontrolled debt and deficit situation that is driving this country into bankruptcy.

Last week, I had the opportunity to visit with a number of voters in my district who were very concerned about the direction of our country, and I read the following quote to them: "Leadership means that the buck stops here. Instead, Washington is shifting the burden of bad choices today onto the backs of our children and grandchildren. America has a debt problem and a failure of leadership. Americans deserve better."

I didn't tell them who had said that. I just asked them if they agreed with that statement. Everybody clapped and cheered. I mentioned that this was said

by then-Senator Barack Obama in 2006 when our debt was \$8.4 trillion. We had an \$8.4 trillion debt in 2006, and the President of the United States then said, "We have a leadership failure. The buck stops here. America deserves better."

Well, if \$8.4 trillion was a failure of leadership, what, Mr. President, is \$14 trillion of debt?

The debt isn't Republican. The debt isn't Democrat. It is both Republicans and Democrats that have put us in the position that we are in today, and this Congress, our obligation is to clean up the mess.

□ 1100

We're told, though, by the White House that we are to raise the debt ceiling—in effect to "do as I say and not as I do," according to the President.

It is irresponsible to take the steps of increasing the debt ceiling without finding solutions to our spending problems that put us here in the first place. I continue, along with my colleagues, to look for those solutions.

We've passed a budget to cut spending and to get our deficit under control. Speaker BOEHNER is negotiating in good faith. But what do we hear from our colleagues in the Senate who have failed to pass a budget for 756 days? They have failed to pass a budget for 756 days. "There's no need to have a Democratic budget," Senator REID said.

The President talks about caps but no real cuts.

The debt ceiling is exactly that. It is a ceiling. It is not an arbitrary number that should simply be moved whenever it's easy to do so. The debt ceiling has been raised 10 times in the past 10 years. That's too much for something that was intended to be an actual check on government spending. If the debt is to be raised again, this country needs and deserves an honest effort to control spending and make sure that we are not in the same position in the future.

The past Congress spent a lot of time dealing with credit card reform to help American consumers. Well, perhaps it's time that we treat the Federal Government itself to a little bit of credit card reform to make sure that the Federal credit card doesn't continue to increase over and over without an end.

Ladies and gentlemen, I am concerned that the future job growth in this country, unless we reel in our Nation's debt, unless we address the deficit, is DOA—debt on arrival.

America deserves better, Mr. President, it certainly does, and we are here to work with you to make sure that it gets better policies, a better future, and that we protect America from future economic catastrophe.

THE GOP VERSUS PUBLIC SERVANTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SPEIER) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise regretfully this morning and sadly this morning to discuss what I believe is a true transgression that took place in our House yesterday.

I was appalled by the behavior displayed by the chairman of the Subcommittee on TARP and Financial Services. After repeatedly changing the time of yesterday's hearing with Professor Elizabeth Warren to discuss the Republican majority's efforts to terminate the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau just weeks before it was to be born, the chairman began the hearing with a petty partisan swipe alluding to whether the witness may or may not be running someday for the U.S. Senate. As if, Mr. Speaker, political ambition is taboo around here.

While the overall tone of the hearing was contentious, that's to be expected. After all, the goal of the hearing was, for my colleagues on the Republican side, to paint the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau as something that is bad for consumers. Why? Because this new consumer bureau's mission is to make Wall Street play by the rules. What a novel idea. But, you see, Wall Street believes that it can take care of itself.

As it turned out, the hearing was a wonderful opportunity for Americans to see not only how far the influence of financial institutions reaches into Congress, but also how competent, confident, and unflappable a public servant Professor Warren is.

Were it up to me, the President would just appoint her to head the CFPB and let her get on with leveling the playing field for American consumers when they borrow or invest their hard-earned money.

Mr. Speaker, Professor Warren answered every question posed to her for the entire hour for which she was asked to testify. When members were called to the floor for two votes, the chairman asked her to stay and wait, and Ms. Warren politely responded that she was told she'd be released at 2:15 and had another meeting at 2:30. What followed was a scene that, had it happened in a junior high student council meeting, would have been stopped by the faculty adviser. Unfortunately, though, our subcommittee is without any kind of adult supervision.

The chairman repeatedly made the same request ad nauseam of Professor Warren, who answered the same each time. She explained that the majority staff had changed the meeting logistics several times, including a 9 o'clock call the previous night to move the hearing from 1:30 to 1:15 to accommodate the congressional calendar. Professor Warren, through her staff, agreed to the change and was told that she would be done at 2:15. Pretty simple, right?

This is when the chairman crossed the line and told Professor Warren, "You're making this up." That's right. He called her a liar. A witness at his committee who juggled her schedule to accommodate him, an adviser to the

President of the United States, who was given an oath at the start of the hearing to tell the truth and nothing but the truth. He called her a liar.

Mr. Speaker, I ask today that the chairman of the subcommittee, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCHENRY) immediately and sincerely apologize to Professor Warren. I also believe he should apologize to the members of the subcommittee—both in the majority and the minority—for denigrating the proceedings of our body and pledge to never allow the political agenda to interfere with the common decency and respect that the rest of us understand is absolutely necessary in order to do the people's work.

However, I won't hold my breath, because this is part of a much larger strategy by my colleagues on the Republican side to paint everyone in public service as liars, cheats, or otherwise as despicable.

On the same day, the chairman of the Oversight Committee did virtually the exact same thing to Mr. Hayes, the Deputy Secretary of the Department of the Interior, advising him not to answer a question because he's under oath, implying that certainly anything the Deputy Secretary might say would be untrue.

Mr. Speaker, we need to do better. Regardless of political affiliation, the American people demand it. Civility and common respect are not signs of weakness or capitulation. They are hallmarks of a functioning democracy.

An apology probably won't be forthcoming, but civility must be restored to this House—or at least school monitors to prevent spitballs from being thrown around in committee hearings.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 8 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until noon.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

Rev. Gene Mills, Louisiana Family Forum, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, offered the following prayer:

We bow our hearts before You, the great and Mighty King.

May today's deliberations be pleasing in Your sight. Let our heart's desire honor each of Heaven's treasures—faith, family, and freedom.

Father, let Your grace touch each need present here today. May every family member represented know the love of the Father, the presence of His